

Minutes of the Imperial Valley/Mexicali Air Quality Taskforce Meeting

SDSU, Imperial Valley Campus
May 31, 2007, Imperial Valley, California

Co-Chairs: Brad Poiriez and Daniel Delgadillo.

Attendance:

Brad Poiriez, Assistant APCO (Air Pollution Control Officer), Imperial County Air Pollution Control District; **Daniel Delgadillo**, Baja California Secretariat of Environmental Protection ; **Manuel Zamora** , Mexicali Ecology Directorate; **Jesus Jimenez Payan**, PROFEPA assistant delegate for Baja California; **Alejandra Padilla Arenas**, CANACINTRA ; **Candido Zatarain**, Environmental Consultant; **Richard Ryan**, SDSU public administration; **Margarito Quintero**, UABC Mexicali Institute of Engineering; **Kimberly Collins**, SDSU; **Juanita Salas**, Congressman Filner's office; **Emmanuel Sanchez** , Taskforce Liaison, Imperial County Air pollution Control District.

Commitments

- ❖ **Brad Poiriez** will contact ARB to present information on the greenhouse gas project.
- ❖ **Juanita Salas** will coordinate a meeting with the Congressman with Kimberly Collins and Brad Poiriez.
- ❖ **Jesus Jimenez Payan** will give his presentation at next meeting, and promised to set up a meeting in CANACAR for Emmanuel Sanchez.

I. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Brad Poiriez welcomed and thanked everyone for coming and introduced himself as the U.S. Co-chair for the taskforce, he mentioned that there are no copies of the last meeting minutes and said that these were sent via e-mail to all members. He stated that Dave Fege, Dimitri Smith, and Maura Mack were not able to attend, and that he would be briefly commenting on their presentations from the National Coordinators Meeting. He also mentioned that copies of the NCM EPA presentation were available. Rick Van Schoik was also unable to attend. Other informational pamphlets available at the meeting were: the EPA Heavy Duty truck Retrofit project, the overall key points of the SCERP meeting; Brad asked if anyone wanted to receive an electronic copy of this document to let Emmanuel know.

II. Self Introductions

III. Review of Minutes from Last Meeting

Brad Poiriez asked all members in attendance whether they had reviewed the Minutes, and for anyone who wished to add or delete comments to please let them know. There were no requests at this time.

IV. Presentations Q & A

Border 2012 Mid-Term Report & National Coordinators Meeting, Brad Poiriez, Assistant APCO, Imperial County Air Pollution Control District.

Richard Ryan asked if there were places where to easily access the emission reduction examples along the border.

Brad Poiriez replied that there is no easy way to find that information, that the only one he knows about is a Federal Repository for Control Equipment for different type of facilities, the RCLB repository.

Margarito Quintero commented that having a formal meeting between Air Quality and Health Taskforces has been in the works for the last three years and it still has not happened. He felt that the people responsible have not been able to make the effort to coordinate tasks, meetings, etc. to make it happen, and he thinks that a greater effort is needed to make this meeting happen.

Brad Poiriez said that he agreed with **Margarito Quintero** and that he had heard the same thing on the subject. So he and Laura Mac decided to try to make it happen on a regional level.

Kimberly Collins stated that all of these projects need to be more public, so others can benefit from the information and be aware of how air pollution is being reduced. And that this is the main issue in the Border 2012 project.

Brad Poiriez responded that there is no sufficient funding or staff to do so, but agreed with Kimberly Collins that it is an important issue to be addressed.

Kimberly Collins stated that Mexicali has an easier way of communicating all air pollution information than in Imperial Valley.

Brad Poiriez commented that the local APCD does participate in giving updates on all information that the district is currently working on for public input.

Margarito Quintero stated the need to establish a fund to be able to bring together the Environmental Health and Air Quality taskforces, so meetings may be held, information distributed, etc.

Brad Poiriez added to this that prior taskforce grant proposals for 1 or 2 day conferences have not been approved for funding.

Kimberly Collins asked if it would be possible for Congressman Filner to provide some kind of support or help. She also asked to reconsider supporting projects, because if Duke Energy is considering funding studies for greenhouse gases, then an endowment should be considered for this region, so it can be used to continue on with projects and be self-sustaining.

Juanita Salas commented that Congress has already passed the 2008 Appropriations budget, and that if there was a request for funding for projects then it would be for the 2009 Appropriations Budget.

Brad Poiriez suggested to **Juanita Salas** a possible meeting with Congressman Filner when he is in the Valley.

Juanita Salas responded that Congressman Filner could possibly attend the September taskforce meeting and another meeting with the Air Quality taskforce.

Margarito Quintero added that Kimberly Collins' suggestion is a very good one to be able to continue with projects to reduce the air pollution.

Brad Poiriez commented that this is something that can be explored further but that for now support from Congressman Filner may be a more suitable option.

Richard Ryan asked if there were any suggested funds for the Border region from the California Air Resources Board regarding the greenhouse gas projects.

Brad Poiriez answered that there were some funds from proposition 1B that went directly to the state, and that 150 people would be hired to implement the AB32 Greenhouse gas and climate change project.

V. Updates

Brad Poiriez stated that Maura Mack, co-chair of the Environmental Health Taskforce, had asked to be put on today's agenda because she wanted to talk to the group about coordinating and working more closely together, which is an issue often mentioned by the members of this Taskforce. One idea is to have first a joint Co-chair meeting, and then an additional meeting with the members of both Taskforces.

Daniel Delgadillo mentioned that Enrique Villegas and Israel Flores attended the National Coordinators meeting in San Antonio. Under the new restructuring of the Secretariat, Israel Flores will now be in charge of all air-related issues. He also stated that 2012 is around the corner and a series of challenges remain unresolved, such as the effects of climate change.

Brad Poiriez mentioned one concern regarding a waste processing facility that is being considered for Nyland, in Imperial Valley, called Liberty XX. This has been a major issue with a group of people that do not want this facility to operate in the county and are gathering signatures for this purpose. The main concern is the trucking and hauling of human waste thru Imperial Valley, which can cause environmental and agricultural damage due to spills that may occur. If this group is successful in detaining the Liberty XX project, they will transfer it to a Mexicali location, since this would mean less strict regulations than in the U. S., but it will cause the transportation of U. S. human waste across the border into Mexico to this facility to be burned for power generation. He stated he hoped by the next meeting he would have more information to share.

Emmanuel Sanchez mentioned that he heard that the Liberty XX project is in fact trying to move forward with the Mexicali location option and that some Mexicali representatives are very interested in this project.

Kimberly Collins questioned the difference between this waste and the everyday hazardous waste from raw material that passes through Imperial Valley

to the maquilas, since both would have the same agricultural impact if an accident occurs.

Brad Poiriez answered that it still has to pass through Imperial Valley, but if it is located in Nyland then it will travel less of a distance through the county, and they would be required to have best available control technology, etc. This is the third attempt to try and locate in Imperial Valley; in previous attempts it had shown that it could meet all Federal, State, and local air quality standards. This time around they would need to present different documentation, since their new project would also include the processing of manure. This facility has only applied for a CUP (Conditional Use Permit) with the Planning Department, but has not submitted a proposal to the Air District.

Kimberly Collins asked whether this would create an opportunity for additional offsets in the community.

Brad Poiriez answered that she is correct and that regardless of the dynamics of this project, their emissions will exceed the threshold, so they will be required to get offsets, and there are not many offsets to begin with, resulting in a couple of issues that will have to be resolved using the Mobile Reduction Credit Rule, which will give them an opportunity to replace existing vehicle fleets to reduce their emissions; another option would be to purchase the existing credits that are in the bank if the holders wish to sell them, but in any event they will be required to get offsets.

Kimberly Collins asked if there was a way to support the project so it would stay in Imperial County.

Brad Poiriez replied that obviously this group could support it, being placed Nyland would have certain advantages, such as having best available control technologies, doing the offsets, meeting all the requirements of all governmental agencies. There are other opportunities for this group to have input, since this type of project would have to undergo all the environmental review, as well as a full EIR. From there it would go to the Planning Department where it will take into consideration the result the Environmental evaluation made and have its own input; from there it would go to the Board of Supervisors to certify an EIR to approve a project. A total of three separate levels are needed to approve a project.

Kimberly Collins stated that since energy is going to be one of the major economic sectors pushed for development both in imperial Valley and Mexicali, for example Duke Energy is taking a position on global warming and greenhouse gas emissions, it would be important for this group to start thinking about how it is going to deal with these types of projects in the future.

Brad Poiriez replied that he agreed, and it brings up the question of how this group will support, or not support projects, given that there are only a few meetings a year and by the time the group meets it might be too late; however, a consensus can reached made via e-mail or a special meeting could be called to vote on which projects this group will support.

Margarito Quintero commented that there is a conference in Mexicali from the PAN candidate in which they are considering an Energy project to give away a certain number of KWh to the community, and mentioned that there is another event on June 12th on Alternative Energy. He also stated that some type of mechanism can be reached for determining what course to take on energy projects without having any extra meetings, maybe a telephone conference or e-mail approval.

Brad Poiriez asked where the June 12th meeting would be held.

Margarito Quintero answered that they would take place in the new Administration Faculty building located on New River Street.

Brad Poiriez asked **Margarito** if he could send via e-mail information on that meeting, **Margarito Quintero** agreed.

Richard Ryan commented on a related topic regarding a list of possible air projects that Rick Van Schoik is currently working on and another list for developers by the Air Pollution District, and asked if they could be joined and published so people that are not in the loop will be able to get information about what options are out there for reducing air pollution or improving air quality.

Brad Poiriez replied that there is in fact a partial list in the CEQA handbook where it lists the optional measures to implement for reducing air pollution. It specifies examples of how to reduce PM-10 or mobile emissions. So it already is published for the public, it can be found on the Imperial County website.

Daniel Delgadillo stated that the Mexican Government has published a new report called Climate Change Strategy, where it specifies the actions and strategies taken by the government to reduce greenhouse gases. He offered to distribute this new strategy to anyone interested via e-mail. He also explained that this strategy consist of 2 points, first carbon capture using forestation and reforestation, and the second is electricity-related, adding that this could help in the determination of whether a potential project could be supported or not by the group.

Brad Poiriez replied that he would distribute a letter with the proposed project to support and a general consensus would be reached to determine this. He suggested that one of the representatives from ARB give a presentation on the government's new bill concerning greenhouse gases and climate change at the next meeting, since it is one of the main concerns in the Border 2012 Program.

Daniel Delgadillo commented on the restructuring of the Secretariat of Environmental Protection. They have a new Secretary, **Enrique Villegas** an undersecretary in Tijuana named **Fernando Macias**, and 3 directors, **Biologist Pedro Arce**, Environmental Impact Director; **Israel Flores**, Environmental Management Director; **Daniel Delgadillo**, Environmental Auditing Director.

A second comment is regarding the certification of 40 companies in which 35 were licensed thru a voluntary audit where all types of environmental hazards are

audited, and there were contaminated gases in these, making this program a big hit because these contaminated gases were stopped in time.

The third update is that they are working on the emissions inventory for Mexicali, trying to follow the same standards as U.S. EPA. The Study for Volatile Organic Compound is finished, and he said that he would give a presentation of the results when they were ready.

Manuel Zamora shared on behalf of the Municipal Directorate of Ecology that they are still working on the new sanitary landfill and it should be finished by the middle of June. On the topic of used tires, they are working with the used tire service industry (llanteros) and have proposed an annual license that will specify how many tires were acquired, sold, and how many remained at the used tire dealer during that year in order to be able to monitor their activities and control their environmental impact.

It was commented that the coming change of office in Baja California will cause changes in the personnel that would be coming back to these meetings, since new officials would be selected if the opposing candidate takes office.

Jesus Jimenez Payan commented on the relationship that must exist between Health and Air Quality, and suggested that all taskforces should be linked to public health, since everything discussed at the other taskforces affects it. He asked about the goals and issues that this taskforce is working towards. He proposed evaluating taskforce goals, and suggested that this could take place via e-mails, conference calls, to propose projects and receive input and vote on the subject.

Richard Ryan stated that by the September meeting their Research Team will have the Bi-national Clean Air Trust fund models and should be able to share the results. He also commented on actions he would like to see for this taskforce; one of them is modeling, for example the El Centro Regional Medical Center to replace their diesel-operated buses, also to contact STARBUCKS and encourage them not to make any drive-thru coffee houses in the Mexicali- Imperial Valley area, and request CARB to inform the group about the greenhouse gas fund.

Kimberly Collins commented that she also shares the same type of frustration as **Richard Ryan** and **Jesus Jimenez Payan**.

Margarito Quintero shared his agreement with **Jesus Jimenez Payan** about the importance of joining all Air, Water and Waste Taskforces with the Environmental Health taskforce.

Emmanuel Sanchez suggested to Manuel Zamora to contact the Imperial Valley Waste Management Board, since they also have a used tire program; they have information on the subject and he offered to send it to him. He also mentioned on the current projects, for example the unpaved parking lots; these unpaved parking lots are required under Rule 8 to be paved or apply BACM measures to reduce the PM-10 levels that they are producing. This is still in progress; the data will be evaluated so they can move forward with implementation.

Brad Poiriez shared that the County has a new ordinance that requires new truck yards to be paved either with asphalt or cement.

Emmanuel Sanchez continued with the update on the current projects, speaking about a retrofit project; they are trying to get more trucking companies involved, but CANACAR has not been able to grant him a meeting. The retrofitting would be free to any trucking companies that want to participate. He requested to the group if they knew any companies to please put them in contact with him.

Jesus Jimenez Payan stated that he knew the person that **Emmanuel Sanchez** wanted to meet with in CANACAR and that he would be setting up a meeting for him.

Brad Poiriez commented on Rule 10 indirect source fee, which is for residential and commercial developments, adding that the fund obtained from this would be used for projects. It has been moving forward and by October it will be submitted for approval.

The Water Resources Board has submitted their proposal alternative for the Salton Sea to the Legislature. All information regarding this proposal is available at the Water Resources website.

He also commented on all the suggestions and opinions regarding the taskforce and will be looking into all of them.

Margarito Quintero shared that they need a place on the agenda for next meeting for a cancer investigation project presentation from the Mexican Cancer Institute. **Emmanuel Sanchez** said he would schedule this presentation.

VI. - Wrap-Up / Date of Next meeting.

Brad Poiriez thanked everyone and wished them a good summer. Next meeting will be held in Mexicali on September 13th, 2007.

Session Adjourned.